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Virginia Department of Aviation recently hosted annual Virginia Aviation Conference in Roanoke

Virginia Aviation Awards banquet also held during 31st annual conference

RICHMOND—The 31st Annual Virginia Aviation Conference was recently held August 25-27, 2004 at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, in Roanoke, Virginia. The theme for this year's conference was "Navigating New Skies."

Sponsored by the Virginia Department of Aviation, Virginia Aviation Board, the Virginia Airport Operators Council and Virginia Aviation Business Association, the conference allows the aviation community to come together for informative discussions and meetings.

This meeting of airport managers, sponsors, consultants, government officials and others with an interest in aviation in Virginia offered breakout sessions on a number of timely topics and ran concurrently with the Virginia Aviation Board meeting. Some of the topics included Land Use, Global Information Systems (GIS) Aviation Applications, Potomac Tracon, and Controlling Airport Wildlife. An exhibit hall featured a wide range of airport-related products and aviation companies promoting and displaying.

On Wednesday evening, August 26th, there was a reception provided by host airport Roanoke Regional.

The annual Virginia Aviation Awards Banquet, which was held on Thursday night August 27th, honored those who have made significant contributions to Virginia Aviation over the past year.

The 2004 Award for the Virginia Airport Manager of the Year was presented to Mark F. Courtney. This award is given in recognition of his outstanding performance as Airport Manager of Lynchburg Regional Airport exemplified by his successful efforts to increase airline service to the citizens of the Lynchburg region.

Curtis J. Grant has been selected as the 2004 Virginia Aviation Person of the Year. This award has been given to him in recognition of his vision and leadership as founder and director of the Aviation Academy, a high school magnet program of Newport News Public Schools, in existence since 1994. Highly skilled and motivated students graduating from the academy will contribute to future aviation in the Commonwealth of Virginia..

In recognition of his lifetime contributions to aviation in Virginia, Ken Scott, has, for over 30 years, provided the leadership that has led to continued growth at Norfolk International

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Airport. With a background of meritorious military service and civil engineering experience, he serves as Executive Director of the Norfolk Airport Authority with overall responsibility for the management, operation, maintenance, and development of the airport. In this capacity, he has guided the airport through numerous improvements and expansions, and prepared it for changes as the industry has matured and rebounded from recent challenges. His knowledge and dedication to the aviation industry and Norfolk International Airport, his drive to continue to improve and innovate, and his strong commitment to his community make Kenneth R. Scott an extraordinary asset to Virginia aviation.

The Virginia Finest Pilot Award has been awarded to Ralph Burr. This award is presented by Angel Flight of Virginia and the Virginia Department of Aviation to a Virginia pilot who has made an outstanding contribution to the health and welfare of Virginia citizens through his provision of no-cost, long-distance medical air transportation through the Angel Flight of Virginia program. Burr who is 68, retired from the General Electric plant in Salem, Virginia. He bought his plane in 1991 after his son urged him to take flying lessons at Virginia Western Community College. He learned about Angel Flight in 1997 when he saw poster on a bulletin board at the Roanoke airport. Before signing up for Angel Flight, he had flown between 500 and 600 hours. Now, Angel Flight missions make up about 75 percent of his plane use. He is married and his wife is also a pilot, along with two of their three sons. Burr, who has flown over 130 Angel Flight missions since 1997, owns a Cessna 172 four-seater.

Three Virginia pilots who, this past year, have introduced the most young people to the joy of flight as a part of the Experimental Aircraft Association's Young Eagles Program are awarded the 2004 Virginia Top Eagle Awards. This year's "Top Eagle #1" is Raymond Judd of Huddleston, Virginia, who flew 135 Young Eagles. "Top Eagle #2" is George Smith of Ashburn, Virginia, who flew 86 Young Eagles. And "Top Eagle #3" is Williams Mackey from Moneta, Virginia, who flew 64 Young Eagles.

The Virginia Department of Aviation is pleased to congratulate all of the 2004 Virginia Aviation Awards winners and thank them for their outstanding contributions to Virginia Aviation.

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